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**THE VICTORIAN SOCIETY**  
The champion for Victorian and Edwardian architecture

Committee Clerk  
Communities Equality and Local Government Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
CARDIFF BAY  
CF99 1NA

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by email to: [celg.committee@wales.gov.uk](mailto:celg.committee@wales.gov.uk)

**Inquiry into the Welsh Government's Historic Environment Policy**

I write in response to this consultation on behalf of The Victorian Society, the national charity campaigning for Victorian and Edwardian architecture. In recognition of our expertise in this field, Welsh Office Circular 61/96 updated by Circular 1/98 requires that the Victorian Society, like other national amenity societies, be notified of certain applications for listed building consent.

1. Of particular concern is the failure of the Welsh Assembly Government to do anything about the *Review of the System of Ecclesiastical Exemption in Wales*, which was published in 2004. It seems to have disappeared without trace. Of particular concern is how far now Wales lags behind best practice in England, for example in failing to require statements of significance in support of faculty applications, with the result that often the impact of the proposals on the significance of the building is often poorly understood.

The Church in Wales would benefit from a central conservation resource of the sort which the Church Buildings Council provides in England.

Information about the historic environment is also difficult to obtain. It is disappointing that Cadw is taking so long to make available online the lists of lists of buildings in Wales. This should proceed without further delay.

4. The proposed merger of RCHAMW with Cadw or other organisations is unlikely to be beneficial for that body and the purposes it serves. Research in larger bodies is often forced to take a back seat to more pressing corporate priorities.

5. To support our involvement in commenting on applications for listed building consent or for faculty we have received a small annual grant from Cadw; last year this amounted to £2000. Such a sum restricts the amount of work we can do in Wales.

Yours sincerely



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